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Item 14 of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-second session of the Commission/
thirteenth meeting of the Conference
of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
23-27 April 1987

Item 6 of the provisional agenda**

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE JOINT
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT

Executive Summary

* E/ECA/TPCW.8/1.

** E/ECA/CM.13/1.

1. The fourth meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment was held in February 1987 at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Addis Ababa. It was attended by representatives of the following ECA member States: Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

2. Most of the discussions of the Joint Committee were held in plenary. All the documents were introduced in plenary sessions for general discussions, detailed technical discussions on each of the documents were held by the two working groups on human settlements and environment.

3. With regard to human settlements issues, the representative of ECA outlined the main activities undertaken by the ECA secretariat from August 1985 to January 1987. The discussions on these activities focused on the following areas: human settlements planning, development of building materials industries, popular participation in housing schemes and co-operation between ECA and other international organizations within and outside the United Nations system.

4. On environmental questions, the representative of ECA introduced to the participants the seven working documents on environmental matters. During the 1986-1987 biennium, the work programme on the environment in Africa had focused on the implementation of ECA resolutions 446 (XVII) on combating desertification in Africa, 474 (XVIII) on the strengthening of African capabilities in environmental matters and 585 (XXI) on the establishment of an African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD).

5. After the presentation of the various documents on Human Settlements and Environment, the representatives of the following countries also introduced their country reports and activities relating to human settlements and environment in their respective countries: Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The representatives of the following organizations also participated in the discussions: the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Shelter-Afrique, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Housing Council (IHC) and the Africa Union of Architects (AUA).

6. The working group on human settlements considered the following technical documents submitted by the secretariat:

(a) Progress report on human settlements activities during the 1985-1986 period;

(b) Integrating human settlements policies and programmes into national socio-economic development planning;

(c) An integrated approach to the evaluation of building construction needs of the African region;

(d) Programmes for promoting institutionalized public participation systems in human settlements;

(e) Programmes for establishing and strengthening training facilities for human settlements personnel at all levels in Africa; and

(f) Human settlements: work programme for the 1988-1989 biennium.

7. The working group on environment examined the following technical documents submitted by the secretariat:

(a) Progress report on the Environment in Africa Programme 1986/1987, activities since the last meeting, including consideration of Environment in Africa Work Programme for 1988-1989 biennium (E/ECA/ENV/35);

(b) Progress report on the development of environmental capabilities to combat desertification and the impact of drought in the African region (E/ECA/ENV/31);

(c) Prevention of encroachment on arable land in Africa (E/ECA/ENV/24/Rev.1);

(d) Developing national environmental standards in Africa (E/ECA/ENV/17);

(e) Development of environmental training for technicians on marine pollution, coastal erosion and depletion of marine resources in the exclusive economic zone (E/ECA/ENV/32);

(f) Cairo Ministerial Conference and progress report on ECA resolution 578(XXI) (E/ECA/ENV/33);

(g) Report of ECA/WMO interagency expert consultations on establishing an African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), Bujumbura, 8-10 October 1986 (E/ECA/ENV/34);

8. In the course of the discussions that followed the introduction of the above-mentioned documents, the participants raised several questions that influenced the final recommendations.

9. After considering the documents submitted by the ECA secretariat, the fourth meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment adopted a resolution on human settlements with special reference to land development policies in Africa, policies and programmes on human settlements, the development of the building sector and training in the field of human settlements in Africa.

10. The Joint Committee also made the following recommendations on environmental matters:

(a) To encourage the participation of drought-stricken African countries to attend such meetings on environmental matters so as to share their experiences with other member States;

- (b) Monitoring desertification and drought in Africa;
- (c) Integration of human settlements programmes with those on forest and soil management and conservation;
- (d) Protection of the marine environment in the island countries;
- (e) Co-operation between ECA, UNEP and OAU in the implementation of the Cairo programme of action and between the Ministerial Conference on Environment and the Joint Committee; and
- (f) Continuation of activities for the establishment of the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD).